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PARENT REPORT AFTER SECOND YEAR'S OPERATION. COOPERATIVE SCHOOL-REHABILITATION CENTER SPECIAL REPORTS, NUMBER 3.

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IN MAY 1967, 64 OF 94 PARENTS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL REHABILITATION CENTER REPORTED THEIR REACTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THEIR STUDENT'S PROGRESS. FORTY-FOUR PARENTS REPORTED CHANGES AND 20 REPORTED NO CHANGES IN STUDENT'S ROUTINE ACTIVITIES AT HOME SUCH AS EATING HABITS, SLEEPING HOURS, AND DRESSING OR GROOMING ACTIVITIES. THE CHANGE OR DEVELOPMENT IN LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES, HOBBIES, OR SOCIAL RELATIONS MOST FREQUENTLY NOTED WAS STUDENT'S TALKING MORE WITH OTHER PEOPLE. ALL EXCEPT TWO PARENTS HAD NOTICED STUDENT'S INCREASED OR CONTINUED INTEREST IN JOBS AND WORK. FIFTY-THREE SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO PROBLEMS IN GETTING HIM TO COME OR TO MAINTAIN INTEREST IN ATTENDING SCHOOL. WORK WAS THE AREA OR ASPECT OF THE PROGRAM STUDENTS LIKED MOST. INCREASED MATURITY AND BETTER COMMUNICATIONS WERE THE RECURRING THEMES OF PARENT COMMENT ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND EXPERIENCE DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS. IN GENERAL, PARENTS FELT THAT THE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE HAD BEEN A POSITIVE, MATURING, AND SATISFYING FEATURE OF THE CHILD'S LIFE. (PS)

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Special Reports are distributed to stimulate discussion and to provide information about ongoing thinking and research at the Center. Reactions and comments are invited.

Cooperative School-Rehabilitation Center
Special Reports # 3

"Parent Report After Second Year's Operation"

June, 1967

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Parent Report After Second Year's Operation

In May of 1967 the parents of students enrolled in Cooperative School Rehabilitation Center were asked to report their reactions and observations to their student's progress. A total of 94 parents were asked to report and of this number 64 replied.

The report form was identical to that used at the end of the initial year. The introduction to the report said, "Note to parents: Please complete this report on your son or daughter. This kind of information from you would help us in getting a more complete understanding of your child and in the work we are doing to develop program."

Routine Activities at Home

In answer to the question, "Have you noticed any changes in routine activities at home such as eating habits, sleeping hours, and dressing or grooming activities?" forty-four parents reported changes while twenty said they have seen no changes in routine activities at home. Of the areas suggested, changes in dressing and grooming activities were most frequently noted. Girls were reported more interested in care of the hair - - three parents reported that they were pleased that their daughters had learned to wash and set their own hair. Parents reported their children wanted to dress nicer, or be cleaner. One parent reported that their son now spends more time on dressing while another said their son now dresses more quickly. Several felt students were more self-sufficient in the dressing and grooming process and said their children were much more aware of appearance. Three parents reported that they were still struggling with the grooming activities with their sons.

In the area of eating, several students were reported more diet conscious as a result of a unit taught on weight. Parents felt that table manners had improved except for one parent who noted that her son continues to eat much too quickly. One said that the child ate a wider variety of foods, having been exposed to eating with the other students in the cafeteria. Parents reported both increases and decreases in appetite.

Generally it was felt that the students were more regulated regarding sleeping. Three parents said their children were tired out and went to bed earlier, and some went to bed without being told. One complained of a child who would not go to bed on time while others reported their children continued to maintain good sleeping habits.

Leisure Time Activities

In response to the second question, "Have you noticed any change or development in leisure time activities, hobbies or social relations with others?" three parents did not answer and eleven said they had seen no change (five of them reporting there had been no change

because the children had always had good social relationships). The remaining parents commented on a wide variety of areas. Most commonly, many reported that now, in contrast to a year ago, students tended to talk more with other people. Several parents felt there was a general improvement resulting in more mature interests and relationships. Several students were noted to now talk with friends from school on the telephone. Other parents commented on a change in associates for their children - - they now play more with age-mates rather than with younger children. Instead of play, as such, leisure time activity is now devoted to sports. The reading material, for a few, has become sports magazines and the sports page. Positive aspects in the child's maturation during the past year are reported in the following comments: has grown socially, doesn't watchtelevision as much, plays with brothers or sisters, goes outside more, likes to "dress up" to go shopping, goes to the movies, has friends over, gets out more, gets along better and appears more satisfied with leisure.

Parent concern with continuing lack of social stimulus was also revealed in reports of difficulty finding leisure time activities or friends. Some children were reported to be involved only in individual or solitary activities such as drawing, building blocks or playing records. Four parents reported that their children appeared to be reading more newspapers, magazines and books. One parent said her daughter read less. One student was making up the deficit in company by talking with imaginary people.

Some increase in reports of participation in organized activities for retarded children was noted. Often these were special projects for teen-agers such as the Marquees, Brigades, Tonka-Teens, and Y-Teens. Several parents mentioned the importance of teen parties and one parent said her child had received a boys club award for citizenship.

Job and Work Interest

In response to the third question, "Have you noticed any development of interest in jobs and work?" seven parents said "yes" without elaboration and two said "no." The remaining responses indicated increased or continued interest in working and in money. Ten parents reported increased interest in working at home or willingness to be helpful with routine household chores. Several noted more awareness of money and desire for pay for work done at home.

Money was also reported a motivator for employment outside the home. For some of the students, parents felt that talk about jobs was just that. They commented that the students knew nothing about a job, were not able to understand what eight hours of work meant, had not the manual skills to work, or were not old enough. Other parents reported on students positive reactions to the types of jobs they did

at school.

Problems in Attending School or Maintaining Interest

The fourth question was "Have there been any problems in getting him to come or to maintain interest in attending school?" Nineteen parents responded "no" without further comment. An additional thirty-four also responded "no" with the general comment that the child had been enthusiastic about school.

Other comments most often involved individual situations. One parent said that she had always had trouble getting her daughter out of bed but that once she was up she was perfectly willing to come to school. One student was reported more interested in coming to school since he had been placed on a job. Another student was reported to have less interest than last year. Two students were reported anxious about coming to school because of too much horseplay or trouble with other students on the bus.

Most Liked Aspects of Program

Question five was "What areas or aspects of the program has he indicated he likes most?" Four parents said "everything," three did not respond, and four other parents said that their students were not verbal enough to tell them.

The most frequently mentioned "likedaspect" of the program was work. This included manipulative lab assignments and work stations in addition to regular jobs. Closely following this area in popularity were the shop, music, arts and crafts, and the demonstration house areas.

Other comments related to particular instructors, the academic classrooms, sewing, group meetingswith the psychologists, working on the school paper, and the dance class. Physical education was a popular area for boys but also, somewhat surprisingly, mentioned by the parents of three girls as their most favorite aspect of the school.

Least Liked Aspects of Program

In response to question six, "What does he dislike or seem to like least about the school?" thirty-one parents said there were no dislikes noted. Four parents reported that their children said the only thing they did not like about school were some of the other students. The cafeteria came in with some comment - - one student dislikedthe school lunches, while another didn't like sitting in the lunch room after eating. One girl disliked gym, while another's parents said she didn't like any kind of phsyical activity. Other individual areas were disliked with

no unanimity. Comments concerned the beauty shop, the manipulative lab, specific job assignments, the academic area, any class work, running the tunnel, and the dance class.

General Impressions and Comments

The last question was "As a whole what has been your impression of his behavior and experience during the past few months?" Similar to last year, the general response to this question was positive. Two parents reported little change, three other parents said that their children's progress had been up and down, and one parent reported no progress at all.

The most reoccuring themes related to increased maturity and better communications. Many parents commented directly on improved capacity to communicate with others. Other parents reported their children were "more self-confident, more independent regarding time and money, coming out of the shell, having better self-control, being able to stick up for himself, more aware of himself, and having pride in his appearance."

Negative aspects of communication were also mentioned. Some children were reported as talking more with the implication that this was in a bothersome or disturbing way. One mother said that her son's behavior was terrible and that he had learned to swear from his friends at school.

Another aspect of behavior frequently mentioned related to general happiness or contentedness of the student. Several parents noted that their children were very happy just to be in school. The child was reported more pleasant at home, helping around the house more, showing improved table manners, getting better exercise, etc. Physical improvements were noted such as "lost weight as a result of being more diet conscious," "eating better foods and less problems with constipation."

A few parents here mentioned a negative aspect of their child. One said he still had such a short attention span it was difficult to deal with him, another child has been tearing up his clothes frequently lately, another is reported as being depressed and bitter about his condition.

Some parents suggested specific areas for emphasis such as typing, reading, ability to tell time, to recognize the alphabet, or that the school ought to have speech therapy, to have more job training, more personal grooming, and more gym. One parent felt that had the child not been programmed from one subject to another, by this time her child might be able to read. Another mother reported that her child learned better with a tactile method and suggested that the school stop using visual as much as tactile methods with her child. Another mother asked the school to find areas for her cerebral palsied child which did not require fine motor skills. Several parents of non-speech children requested

more information from the school on what the child was doing so these activities could be reinforced at home. A number of parents merely said that they school was doing a good job, the teachers were trying hard, the child appreciated the school.

In general, the results of this survey have again been helpful. Responses point up needs for communication between parents and the staff. Many parents continue to have a positive attitude toward the Center in spite of the fact that they receive no specific feed back from their student. In general, the school experience has been seen as a positive, maturing and satisfying feature of the child's life.